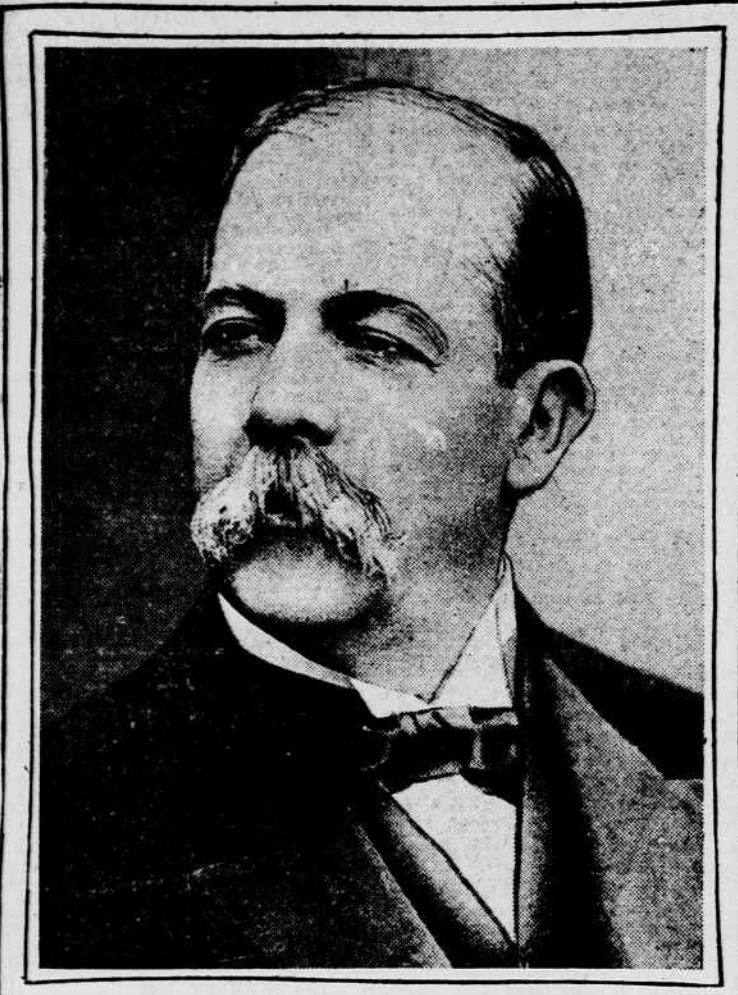


A Pen Picture of Central America's Great Executive

THE Personality of Manuel Estrada Cabrera, President of Guatemala—He Keeps in Touch With News of the World by Wireless—His Working Hours—His Personal Appearance—A Huge Map of Guatemala Set Up on a Race Track—Education His Hobby. Familiar With Every Inch of His Country.

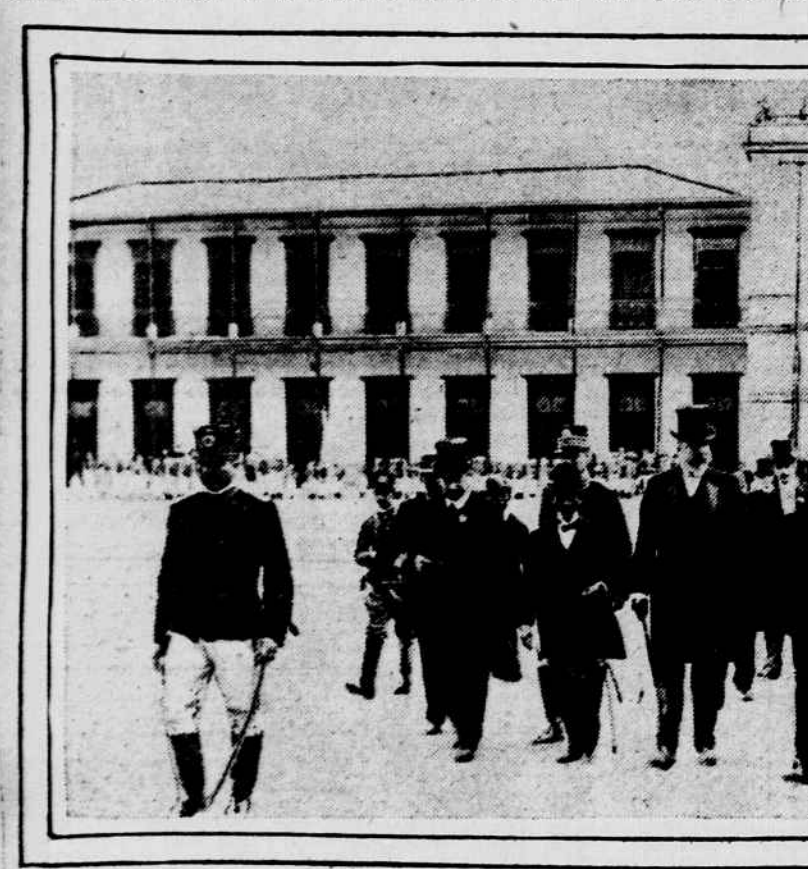


MANUEL ESTRADA CABRERA, President of Guatemala since 1898.

BY WINGROVE BATHON.

Special Correspondence of The Star. GUATEMALA CITY, Guatemala, June 1, 1916.

THIS is an intimate word portrait, taken at his own luncheon table, of Manuel Estrada Cabrera, president of Guatemala, who has been called the greatest executive Central America has ever known. It may be just as well to set down at the beginning of this record the statement that those who have read accounts of this man gathered from his enemies by persons who have never met him will be disappointed if they expect to read here a confirmation of the stories that have been told about him. I met his enemies and talked with them, off and on, for ten days before I met him. This article has nothing to do with politics, the economic situation of Guatemala, or the relation of its government to the other countries of Central America, the United States, or the world in general. It is not even an interview with the President of Guatemala, although it will be necessary to report some of the things he said in order to give some idea of the man. Much less will this account endeavor to sweepily characterize Estrada Cabrera as good, bad or in between.



PRESIDENT CABRERA VISITING MILITARY SCHOOL AT GUATEMALA CITY.

History will do that. But until the time comes for the permanent scroll to be lettered, perhaps a useful purpose will be served if there are here a few words about the man. On the one hand, some details of a simple, unostentatious gentleman, at ease in his own house. It might be said that one who had broken Estrada Cabrera's bread and eaten his salt could not do otherwise than speak favorably of him. On the other hand, it might also very particularly be pointed out that one so situated could remain silent if he chose.

Let there be nothing to be silent about. Estrada Cabrera is too big a man to remain silent about when one has the opportunity to paint a picture exactly the contrary of others that have been painted.

The conscientious, working newspaper reporter, trained to receive impressions and to report facts, in what ever community his endeavors may lie, knows that one of the most difficult features of his daily task is to avoid receiving impressions before he comes into close contact with his subject. He wants details at first hand. Neither the fulsome flattery of sycophants nor the ravings of the misunderstood and disappointed "see by."

Dozens of Washington newspapermen with a knowledge of international affairs will bear witness to the fact that a personal contact with a public man of a foreign country completely dispaves statements that have been made about such a man. Thus, I was not surprised to find "The Old Eagle," "The Old Lion," "The Old Tiger" and "The Old Bear," as Estrada Cabrera has variously been called, neither old, nor an eagle, nor a lion, nor a tiger, nor a bear. He is about the mildest-mannered man, and one of the pleasantest to speak colloquially, that I have ever been my good fortune to lunch with, and no small, intimate party of four persons, including the president, was ever better entertained than at the luncheon which this article records.

He amused himself and his guests by telling of his difficulties with his servants, and some of his guests amused him by anecdotes of public men of the United States whom he admires. At the table were Capt. Sherbourne C. Hopkins of Washington and Delphinio San-

opens doors and draws aside curtains for his visitors, so that they may not bring up the rear, but at table the servants serve the President of Guatemala first.

My visit lasted from about 12:30 to about 3:30 o'clock. It was in the private apartments of the president's residence, an old house which he has had remodeled and attached to the palace. As he said, he acquired it eight or nine years ago, when it was the Germania Club, in order to obtain private apartments large enough in which to entertain Admiral Swinhurn and the officers of the United States Pacific squadron, who were brought by the president from San Jose, on the Pacific coast, to Guatemala City, the capital, on a visit of entertainment which is famous for its lavishness in the history of the United States Navy, so anxious has Estrada Cabrera always been, he told me, to be good friends with the people of the United States.

An incident had occurred which had made a great impression on the president. He detailed it. He had been inspecting a school, and a boy with a Spanish-Indian name (elusive to the Anglo-Saxon) had attracted his attention by his ready answers. The president had asked him some questions and had been so struck by the youngster's replies that he had said to him, "Come and see me at the palace some time."

He gave instructions when he returned home that if the boy ever asked for him he was to be admitted, and then forgot all about him.

Some time later the boy showed up, and when the president saw him he inquired what he could do for him. The youngster precociously replied that he

pass through hedges of soldiers and by devious winding ways to reach Estrada Cabrera.

later he amused himself in the salon, when coffee was served, without hot cream or hot milk or hot water, as is the custom in Guatemala, and with sugar in the filled cups before it was brought into the room, by declaring, "I am sorry to say that it will be necessary to drink this coffee the way the kitchen has prepared it. Evidently they think if it suits the kitchen it will have to suit us."

The luncheon, so far as its substantialities were concerned, was a combination of European and Guatemalteco cookery and edibles. It was served on a service of luster ware, with the initials "M. E. C." in a monogram—a service that looked like and was as beautiful as mother of pearl. The luncheon room was a long room with the sunlight coming in from a skylight, its walls adorned with paintings of fruit pieces, fish, game and so on. The floor was of cool tiles. The servants were

ual menu having been written out and placed at each plate. Sherry, as well as a wine which looked like a sauterne, and champagne were served in addition to mineral waters. The first course was an oyster soup, creamed; then came, in the Russian style, served separately, macaroni; then a fish from the Pacific coast, with an egg sauce; then chicken, with small peas; then a fillet of beef, with mushrooms; then a paté, of which the delicacy but not the name remains; then, again in the Russian style, served separately, asparagus.

Following these were three desserts, served separately. First, an enormous dish of fruit was passed. It contained fresh mangoes, papayas, bananas and other native growths. A pudding, something like a cabinet pudding with a wine sauce, followed. The last course was a pineapple ice.

It developed that the president goes to his desk at 7 o'clock in the morning and is in his offices every day until 11 o'clock at night, with an hour off for luncheon and another hour off for dinner, except when he has visitors who have come long distances. He has four or five secretaries, and answers every letter, however apparently trivial, addressed to him.

The chief of these secretaries is Gen. Jose M. Letona, the president's most trusted friend and confidant. Another of his aids and secretaries is Delphinio Sanchez la Tour. All of them, including the president, speak the language "the tribe," as it is known in the United States—the colloquialisms, the slang of the day of the sophisticated man.

The president apparently was pleased to learn of a new one during the luncheon—the characterization of water powers for electrical energy as "white coal," as it is called among engineers in the United States. He spoke of Guatemala's tremendous resources in waterfalls and swiftly moving streams or, rather, assented, when his attention was called to them, remarking that Guatemala has sufficient energy in her waters to harness for electrical purposes to take the place of billions of tons of coal.

It is of cement, and water is pumped or forced to the top of the mountains thence to run down, in actual, flowing rivers and waterfalls and through minuscule of Guatemala's lakes to the oceans.

It tells the school children who go there to see it in operation more about geography in half an hour than they get from books in a whole session, the president believes.

Education is one of his hobbies. These and other affairs which keep him and his secretaries busy from early in the morning until late at night were

There were ten courses, an individual called "to give myself the pleasure and honor of saluting you in person."

This, the president said, in view of the fact that the youngster is only five years old, tickled his fancy, and, as the president phrased it, he "resolved to pursue the adventure." Asked about his father's station in life, the youngster endeavored to avoid replying, saying, "That is not a proper subject for polite company," from which it developed that said father was a doctor of the streets, and his mother—the president here said, as translated to me, "Let us draw the veil of charity."

It is probably not worth while to pursue the story farther. This piece of Guatemalteco and there was never a word uttered in regard to it, through a meal of many courses, except upon one occasion when the service was interrupted by a fork being used by a visitor. Admission was expressed for the floral pieces on the long table, and while the looser rose leaves strewn across the tablecloth were being admitted, the subject of orchids, which grow wild in the jungles of Guatemala, came up.

The president remarked that he would exhibit some orchids later. Instantly a vase of magnificent specimens was set upon the table, without request and in silence. That he faithfully served was evident, although

This is supplementary to the news service he receives by cable from all over the world, and he devotes the hour between 11 and 12 o'clock every morning to reading these reports and keeping himself in touch with the world's events.

His entertainment at luncheon was wholly of an informal, intimate character, and if the cares of state stalked behind his chair he was careful, as a most anxious and concerned host, to interpose what it is necessary to call his undoubtedly big personality between his guests and the shadow of such cares.

The service at table was of a clockwork precision and there was never a word uttered in regard to it, through a meal of many courses, except upon one occasion when the service was interrupted by a fork being used by a visitor. Admission was expressed for the floral pieces on the long table, and while the looser rose leaves strewn across the tablecloth were being admitted, the subject of orchids, which grow wild in the jungles of Guatemala, came up.

The president remarked that he would exhibit some orchids later. Instantly a vase of magnificent specimens was set upon the table, without request and in silence. That he faithfully served was evident, although

president came in, unannounced and alone, American cocktails and mineral waters were served as preliminary refreshments on a tray covered with loose rose leaves, and conversation began.

The circumstances could not have been more simple if three men had been expected to lunch in any private house of any gentleman in the United States. One marveled at the rot that has been printed and talked in foreign journals about how it is necessary to

mustache, which is long, gnarled and chewed, is almost wholly white. His eyes—whence came his sobriquet of "the old eagle"—are the most striking feature of his personal appearance. He has an olive complexion, a satin skin, a head that leans attentively toward a speaker, a graceful carriage and a trick of half grins and of a partly doubled up fist, which give the impression of latent force, reserve power, as one who might say, "I could go farther." He

History will do that. But until the time comes for the permanent scroll to be lettered, perhaps a useful purpose will be served if there are here a few words about the man. On the one hand, some details of a simple, unostentatious gentleman, at ease in his own house. It might be said that one who had broken Estrada Cabrera's bread and eaten his salt could not do otherwise than speak favorably of him. On the other hand, it might also very particularly be pointed out that one so situated could remain silent if he chose.

Let there be nothing to be silent about. Estrada Cabrera is too big a man to remain silent about when one has the opportunity to paint a picture exactly the contrary of others that have been painted.

The conscientious, working newspaper reporter, trained to receive impressions and to report facts, in what ever community his endeavors may lie, knows that one of the most difficult features of his daily task is to avoid receiving impressions before he comes into close contact with his subject. He wants details at first hand. Neither the fulsome flattery of sycophants nor the ravings of the misunderstood and disappointed "see by."

Dozens of Washington newspapermen with a knowledge of international affairs will bear witness to the fact that a personal contact with a public man of a foreign country completely dispaves statements that have been made about such a man. Thus, I was not surprised to find "The Old Eagle," "The Old Lion," "The Old Tiger" and "The Old Bear," as Estrada Cabrera has variously been called, neither old, nor an eagle, nor a lion, nor a tiger, nor a bear. He is about the mildest-mannered man, and one of the pleasantest to speak colloquially, that I have ever been my good fortune to lunch with, and no small, intimate party of four persons, including the president, was ever better entertained than at the luncheon which this article records.

He amused himself and his guests by telling of his difficulties with his servants, and some of his guests amused him by anecdotes of public men of the United States whom he admires. At the table were Capt. Sherbourne C. Hopkins of Washington and Delphinio San-

opens doors and draws aside curtains for his visitors, so that they may not bring up the rear, but at table the servants serve the President of Guatemala first.

My visit lasted from about 12:30 to about 3:30 o'clock. It was in the private apartments of the president's residence, an old house which he has had remodeled and attached to the palace. As he said, he acquired it eight or nine years ago, when it was the Germania Club, in order to obtain private apartments large enough in which to entertain Admiral Swinhurn and the officers of the United States Pacific squadron, who were brought by the president from San Jose, on the Pacific coast, to Guatemala City, the capital, on a visit of entertainment which is famous for its lavishness in the history of the United States Navy, so anxious has Estrada Cabrera always been, he told me, to be good friends with the people of the United States.

An incident had occurred which had made a great impression on the president. He detailed it. He had been inspecting a school, and a boy with a Spanish-Indian name (elusive to the Anglo-Saxon) had attracted his attention by his ready answers. The president had asked him some questions and had been so struck by the youngster's replies that he had said to him, "Come and see me at the palace some time."

He gave instructions when he returned home that if the boy ever asked for him he was to be admitted, and then forgot all about him.

Some time later the boy showed up, and when the president saw him he inquired what he could do for him. The youngster precociously replied that he

pass through hedges of soldiers and by devious winding ways to reach Estrada Cabrera.

later he amused himself in the salon, when coffee was served, without hot cream or hot milk or hot water, as is the custom in Guatemala, and with sugar in the filled cups before it was brought into the room, by declaring, "I am sorry to say that it will be necessary to drink this coffee the way the kitchen has prepared it. Evidently they think if it suits the kitchen it will have to suit us."

The luncheon, so far as its substantialities were concerned, was a combination of European and Guatemalteco cookery and edibles. It was served on a service of luster ware, with the initials "M. E. C." in a monogram—a service that looked like and was as beautiful as mother of pearl. The luncheon room was a long room with the sunlight coming in from a skylight, its walls adorned with paintings of fruit pieces, fish, game and so on. The floor was of cool tiles. The servants were

ual menu having been written out and placed at each plate. Sherry, as well as a wine which looked like a sauterne, and champagne were served in addition to mineral waters. The first course was an oyster soup, creamed; then came, in the Russian style, served separately, macaroni; then a fish from the Pacific coast, with an egg sauce; then chicken, with small peas; then a fillet of beef, with mushrooms; then a paté, of which the delicacy but not the name remains; then, again in the Russian style, served separately, asparagus.

Following these were three desserts, served separately. First, an enormous dish of fruit was passed. It contained fresh mangoes, papayas, bananas and other native growths. A pudding, something like a cabinet pudding with a wine sauce, followed. The last course was a pineapple ice.

It developed that the president goes to his desk at 7 o'clock in the morning and is in his offices every day until 11 o'clock at night, with an hour off for luncheon and another hour off for dinner, except when he has visitors who have come long distances. He has four or five secretaries, and answers every letter, however apparently trivial, addressed to him.

The chief of these secretaries is Gen. Jose M. Letona, the president's most trusted friend and confidant. Another of his aids and secretaries is Delphinio Sanchez la Tour. All of them, including the president, speak the language "the tribe," as it is known in the United States—the colloquialisms, the slang of the day of the sophisticated man.

The president apparently was pleased to learn of a new one during the luncheon—the characterization of water powers for electrical energy as "white coal," as it is called among engineers in the United States. He spoke of Guatemala's tremendous resources in waterfalls and swiftly moving streams or, rather, assented, when his attention was called to them, remarking that Guatemala has sufficient energy in her waters to harness for electrical purposes to take the place of billions of tons of coal.

It is of cement, and water is pumped or forced to the top of the mountains thence to run down, in actual, flowing rivers and waterfalls and through minuscule of Guatemala's lakes to the oceans.

It tells the school children who go there to see it in operation more about geography in half an hour than they get from books in a whole session, the president believes.

Education is one of his hobbies. These and other affairs which keep him and his secretaries busy from early in the morning until late at night were

There were ten courses, an individual called "to give myself the pleasure and honor of saluting you in person."

This, the president said, in view of the fact that the youngster is only five years old, tickled his fancy, and, as the president phrased it, he "resolved to pursue the adventure." Asked about his father's station in life, the youngster endeavored to avoid replying, saying, "That is not a proper subject for polite company," from which it developed that said father was a doctor of the streets, and his mother—the president here said, as translated to me, "Let us draw the veil of charity."

It is probably not worth while to pursue the story farther. This piece of Guatemalteco and there was never a word uttered in regard to it, through a meal of many courses, except upon one occasion when the service was interrupted by a fork being used by a visitor. Admission was expressed for the floral pieces on the long table, and while the looser rose leaves strewn across the tablecloth were being admitted, the subject of orchids, which grow wild in the jungles of Guatemala, came up.

The president remarked that he would exhibit some orchids later. Instantly a vase of magnificent specimens was set upon the table, without request and in silence. That he faithfully served was evident, although

This is supplementary to the news service he receives by cable from all over the world, and he devotes the hour between 11 and 12 o'clock every morning to reading these reports and keeping himself in touch with the world's events.

His entertainment at luncheon was wholly of an informal, intimate character, and if the cares of state stalked behind his chair he was careful, as a most anxious and concerned host, to interpose what it is necessary to call his undoubtedly big personality between his guests and the shadow of such cares.

The service at table was of a clockwork precision and there was never a word uttered in regard to it, through a meal of many courses, except upon one occasion when the service was interrupted by a fork being used by a visitor. Admission was expressed for the floral pieces on the long table, and while the looser rose leaves strewn across the tablecloth were being admitted, the subject of orchids, which grow wild in the jungles of Guatemala, came up.

The president remarked that he would exhibit some orchids later. Instantly a vase of magnificent specimens was set upon the table, without request and in silence. That he faithfully served was evident, although

president came in, unannounced and alone, American cocktails and mineral waters were served as preliminary refreshments on a tray covered with loose rose leaves, and conversation began.

The circumstances could not have been more simple if three men had been expected to lunch in any private house of any gentleman in the United States. One marveled at the rot that has been printed and talked in foreign journals about how it is necessary to

mustache, which is long, gnarled and chewed, is almost wholly white. His eyes—whence came his sobriquet of "the old eagle"—are the most striking feature of his personal appearance. He has an olive complexion, a satin skin, a head that leans attentively toward a speaker, a graceful carriage and a trick of half grins and of a partly doubled up fist, which give the impression of latent force, reserve power, as one who might say, "I could go farther." He

History will do that. But until the time comes for the permanent scroll to be lettered, perhaps a useful purpose will be served if there are here a few words about the man. On the one hand, some details of a simple, unostentatious gentleman, at ease in his own house. It might be said that one who had broken Estrada Cabrera's bread and eaten his salt could not do otherwise than speak favorably of him. On the other hand, it might also very particularly be pointed out that one so situated could remain silent if he chose.

Let there be nothing to be silent about. Estrada Cabrera is too big a man to remain silent about when one has the opportunity to paint a picture exactly the contrary of others that have been painted.

The conscientious, working newspaper reporter, trained to receive impressions and to report facts, in what ever community his endeavors may lie, knows that one of the most difficult features of his daily task is to avoid receiving impressions before he comes into close contact with his subject. He wants details at first hand. Neither the fulsome flattery of sycophants nor the ravings of the misunderstood and disappointed "see by."

Dozens of Washington newspapermen with a knowledge of international affairs will bear witness to the fact that a personal contact with a public man of a foreign country completely dispaves statements that have been made about such a man. Thus, I was not surprised to find "The Old Eagle," "The Old Lion," "The Old Tiger" and "The Old Bear," as Estrada Cabrera has variously been called, neither old, nor an eagle, nor a lion, nor a tiger, nor a bear. He is about the mildest-mannered man, and one of the pleasantest to speak colloquially, that I have ever been my good fortune to lunch with, and no small, intimate party of four persons, including the president, was ever better entertained than at the luncheon which this article records.

He amused himself and his guests by telling of his difficulties with his servants, and some of his guests amused him by anecdotes of public men of the United States whom he admires. At the table were Capt. Sherbourne C. Hopkins of Washington and Delphinio San-

opens doors and draws aside curtains for his visitors, so that they may not bring up the rear, but at table the servants serve the President of Guatemala first.

My visit lasted from about 12:30 to about 3:30 o'clock. It was in the private apartments of the president's residence, an old house which he has had remodeled and attached to the palace. As he said, he acquired it eight or nine years ago, when it was the Germania Club, in order to obtain private apartments large enough in which to entertain Admiral Swinhurn and the officers of the United States Pacific squadron, who were brought by the president from San Jose, on the Pacific coast, to Guatemala City, the capital, on a visit of entertainment which is famous for its lavishness in the history of the United States Navy, so anxious has Estrada Cabrera always been, he told me, to be good friends with the people of the United States.

An incident had occurred which had made a great impression on the president. He detailed it. He had been inspecting a school, and a boy with a Spanish-Indian name (elusive to the Anglo-Saxon) had attracted his attention by his ready answers. The president had asked him some questions and had been so struck by the youngster's replies that he had said to him, "Come and see me at the palace some time."

He gave instructions when he returned home that if the boy ever asked for him he was to be admitted, and then forgot all about him.

Some time later the boy showed up, and when the president saw him he inquired what he could do for him. The youngster precociously replied that he

pass through hedges of soldiers and by devious winding ways to reach Estrada Cabrera.

later he amused himself in the salon, when coffee was served, without hot cream or hot milk or hot water, as is the custom in Guatemala, and with sugar in the filled cups before it was brought into the room, by declaring, "I am sorry to say that it will be necessary to drink this coffee the way the kitchen has prepared it. Evidently they think if it suits the kitchen it will have to suit us."

The luncheon, so far as its substantialities were concerned, was a combination of European and Guatemalteco cookery and edibles. It was served on a service of luster ware, with the initials "M. E. C." in a monogram—a service that looked like and was as beautiful as mother of pearl. The luncheon room was a long room with the sunlight coming in from a skylight, its walls adorned with paintings of fruit pieces, fish, game and so on. The floor was of cool tiles. The servants were

ual menu having been written out and placed at each plate. Sherry, as well as a wine which looked like a sauterne, and champagne were served in addition to mineral waters. The first course was an oyster soup, creamed; then came, in the Russian style, served separately, macaroni; then a fish from the Pacific coast, with an egg sauce; then chicken, with small peas; then a fillet of beef, with mushrooms; then a paté, of which the delicacy but not the name remains; then, again in the Russian style, served separately, asparagus.

Following these were three desserts, served separately. First, an enormous dish of fruit was passed. It contained fresh mangoes, papayas, bananas and other native growths. A pudding, something like a cabinet pudding with a wine sauce, followed. The last course was a pineapple ice.

It developed that the president goes to his desk at 7 o'clock in the morning and is in his offices every day until 11 o'clock at night, with an hour off for luncheon and another hour off for dinner, except when he has visitors who have come long distances. He has four or five secretaries, and answers every letter, however apparently trivial, addressed to him.

The chief of these secretaries is Gen. Jose M. Letona, the president's most trusted friend and confidant. Another of his aids and secretaries is Delphinio Sanchez la Tour. All of them, including the president, speak the language "the tribe," as it is known in the United States—the colloquialisms, the slang of the day of the sophisticated man.

The president apparently was pleased to learn of a new one during the luncheon—the characterization of water powers for electrical energy as "white coal," as it is called among engineers in the United States. He spoke of Guatemala's tremendous resources in waterfalls and swiftly moving streams or, rather, assented, when his attention was called to them, remarking that Guatemala has sufficient energy in her waters to harness for electrical purposes to take the place of billions of tons of coal.

It is of cement, and water is pumped or forced to the top of the mountains thence to run down, in actual, flowing rivers and waterfalls and through minuscule of Guatemala's lakes to the oceans.

It tells the school children who go there to see it in operation more about geography in half an hour than they get from books in a whole session, the president believes.

Education is one of his hobbies. These and other affairs which keep him and his secretaries busy from early in the morning until late at night were

There were ten courses, an individual called "to give myself the pleasure and honor of saluting you in person."

This, the president said, in view of the fact that the youngster is only five years old, tickled his fancy, and, as the president phrased it, he "resolved to pursue the adventure." Asked about his father's station in life, the youngster endeavored to avoid replying, saying, "That is not a proper subject for polite company," from which it developed that said father was a doctor of the streets, and his mother—the president here said, as translated to me, "Let us draw the veil of charity."

It is probably not worth while to pursue the story farther. This piece of Guatemalteco and there was never a word uttered in regard to it, through a meal of many courses, except upon one occasion when the service was interrupted by a fork being used by a visitor. Admission was expressed for the floral pieces on the long table, and while the looser rose leaves strewn across the tablecloth were being admitted, the subject of orchids, which grow wild in the jungles of Guatemala, came up.

The president remarked that he would exhibit some orchids later. Instantly a vase of magnificent specimens was set upon the table, without request and in silence. That he faithfully served was evident, although

This is supplementary to the news service he receives by cable from all over the world, and he devotes the hour between 11 and 12 o'clock every morning to reading these reports and keeping himself in touch with the world's events.

His entertainment at luncheon was wholly of an informal, intimate character, and if the cares of state stalked behind his chair he was careful, as a most anxious and concerned host, to interpose what it is necessary to call his undoubtedly big personality between his guests and the shadow of such cares.

The service at table was of a clockwork precision and there was never a word uttered in regard to it, through a meal of many courses, except upon one occasion when the service was interrupted by a fork being used by a visitor. Admission was expressed for the floral pieces on the long table, and while the looser rose leaves strewn across the tablecloth were being admitted, the subject of orchids, which grow wild in the jungles of Guatemala, came up.

The president remarked that he would exhibit some orchids later. Instantly a vase of magnificent specimens was set upon the table, without request and in silence. That he faithfully served was evident, although

president came in, unannounced and alone, American cocktails and mineral waters were served as preliminary refreshments on a tray covered with loose rose leaves, and conversation began.

The circumstances could not have been more simple if three men had been expected to lunch in any private house of any gentleman in the United States. One marveled at the rot that has been printed and talked in foreign journals about how it is necessary to

mustache, which is long, gnarled and chewed, is almost wholly white. His eyes—whence came his sobriquet of "the old eagle"—are the most striking feature of his personal appearance. He has an olive complexion, a satin skin, a head that leans attentively toward a speaker, a graceful carriage and a trick of half grins and of a partly doubled up fist, which give the impression of latent force, reserve power, as one who might say, "I could go farther." He

History will do that. But until the time comes for the permanent scroll to be lettered, perhaps a useful purpose will be served if there are here a few words about the man. On the one hand, some details of a simple, unostentatious gentleman, at ease in his own house. It might be said that one who had broken Estrada Cabrera's bread and eaten his salt could not do otherwise than speak favorably of him. On the other hand, it might also very particularly be pointed out that one so situated could remain silent if he chose.

Let there be nothing to be silent about. Estrada Cabrera is too big a man to remain silent about when one has the opportunity to paint a picture exactly the contrary of others that have been painted.

The conscientious, working newspaper reporter, trained to receive impressions and to report facts, in what ever community his endeavors may lie, knows that one of the most difficult features of his daily task is to avoid receiving impressions before he comes into close contact with his subject. He wants details at first hand. Neither the fulsome flattery of sycophants nor the ravings of the misunderstood and disappointed "see by."

Dozens of Washington newspapermen with a knowledge of international affairs will bear witness to the fact that a personal contact with a public man of a foreign country completely dispaves statements that have been made about such a man. Thus, I was not surprised to find "The Old Eagle," "The Old Lion," "The Old Tiger" and "The Old Bear," as Estrada Cabrera has variously been called, neither old, nor an eagle, nor a lion, nor a tiger, nor a bear. He is about the mildest-mannered man, and one of the pleasantest to speak colloquially, that I have ever been my good fortune to lunch with, and no small, intimate party of four persons, including the president, was ever better entertained than at the luncheon which this article records.

He amused himself and his guests by telling of his difficulties with his servants, and some of his guests amused him by anecdotes of public men of the United States whom he admires. At the table were Capt. Sherbourne C. Hopkins of Washington and Delphinio San-

opens doors and draws aside curtains for his visitors, so that they may not bring up the rear, but at table the servants serve the President of Guatemala first.

My visit lasted from about 12:30 to about 3:30 o'clock. It was in the private apartments of the president's residence, an old house which he has had remodeled and attached to the palace. As he said, he acquired it eight or nine years ago, when it was the Germania Club, in order to obtain private apartments large enough in which to entertain Admiral Swinhurn and the officers of the United States Pacific squadron, who were brought by the president from San Jose, on the Pacific coast, to Guatemala City, the capital, on a visit of entertainment which is famous for its lavishness in the history of the United States Navy, so anxious has Estrada Cabrera always been, he told me, to be good friends with the people of the United States.

An incident had occurred which had made a great impression on the president. He detailed it. He had been inspecting a school, and a boy with a Spanish-Indian name (elusive to the Anglo-Saxon) had attracted his attention by his ready answers. The president had asked him some questions and had been so struck by the youngster's replies that he had said to him, "Come and see me at the palace some time."

He gave instructions when he returned home that if the boy ever asked for him he was to be admitted, and then forgot all about him.

Some time later the boy showed up, and when the president saw him he inquired what he could do for him. The youngster precociously replied that he

pass through hedges of soldiers and by devious winding ways to reach Estrada Cabrera.

later he amused himself in the salon, when coffee was served, without hot cream